



CONNECTICUT CHAPTER

RE: RAISED BILL NO. 6616 - AN ACT CONCERNING EXPANSION OF HUSKY BENEFITS TO THOSE INELIGIBLE DUE TO IMMIGRATION STATUS

Recommended Committee Action: SUPPORT THE BILL

The Connecticut Chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (CT AILA) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization comprised of immigration attorneys and law professors. AILA was founded in 1946 to promote justice, advocate for fair and reasonable immigration law and policy, advance the quality of immigration and nationality law and practice, and enhance the professional development of its members.

The Connecticut Chapter has more than 250 members who represent U.S. families seeking permanent residence for close family members, as well as U.S. businesses seeking talent from the global marketplace. We also represent foreign students, entrepreneurs, researchers, entertainers, athletes, and often on a pro bono basis, asylum seekers.

CT AILA supported the original Act Providing Medical Assistance To Certain Individuals Regardless Of Immigration Status, and then supported SB 284, which was introduced in the 2022 session to expand access to HUSKY coverage for youth through the age of eighteen regardless of their immigration status. We now would like to affirm our support for House Bill 6616, which initially makes state-funded medical assistance available to individuals 20 years of age and younger who otherwise would qualify for HUSKY A, C, and D coverage, regardless of immigration status, and then effective June 1, 2024, extends such coverage to individuals age 25 years of age and younger. It also expands HUSKY B coverage to children age 18 and under, regardless of their immigration status, in lieu of the current age 12 or younger for initial enrollees. We believe that our state has both a moral and fiscal responsibility to make medical coverage available to all low-income residents, regardless of immigration status. We also believe that increasing the age of those who qualify for HUSKY coverage furthers the intended goal of the original Act. Limiting HUSKY coverage to those minors who initially enrolled by age 12 means that many immigrant youth are not afforded care that is so essential throughout adolescence. As many health care providers emphasize, patients who lack medical coverage typically do not obtain preventive care, tend to rely on under-resourced neighborhood clinics and hospital emergency rooms for their health care needs, and are forced to leave illnesses untreated until they become catastrophic, ultimately necessitating expensive hospital-based care.

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